

Cedar Rapids Clean Up



Whether it's cleaning out flood drenched houses in Cedar Rapids, IA or making Braille books for people throughout the world, it takes a servant heart serving Jesus.

Fifteen youth and adults from Calvary Lutheran Church in Sioux City, led by Director of Christian Education Cindy Storm, set out to Cedar Rapids, IA one year after the 2008 historic flood. Cindy shares, "Even after one year we encountered vacant homes and blocks of the city abandoned. We worked on two homes while in Cedar Rapids. The first home was in a neighborhood where most homes had been restored. Our workers were able to meet some of the neighbors. They expressed gratefulness for our groups' efforts in helping restore their neighborhood.



The second home was next to the river in the abandoned area of the city. Other than the police patrolling the neighborhood to prevent vandalism, we were the only people within 15-20 blocks. The houses were all deserted and left un-touched after the flood. The small home we worked on had been completely immersed in the river water. Whoever had lived there, escaped quickly from the flood. The cupboards were full of canned items and flood water still sat in all the pans in the cupboards. A bathrobe was found draped over the mud-filled tub.



Although we did not talk to anyone specifically about the flood in that neighborhood, the former inhabitants expressed their thoughts on the garage doors with 'please don't forget us' and 'give us hope.' I would encourage all congregations in Iowa District West to prayerfully consider sending a team of workers to the Cedar Rapids area. It is easy to do by contacting the Volunteer Reception Center at **319-540-4810**.

God blessed our group tremendously through this service to the Cedar Rapids community and God's precious children living in the flooded area."

Blind and Visually Impaired Outreach

As I was leaving Peace Lutheran Church, Marcus after a committee meeting, I heard a questioning voice say, “Ellie Menz”? It was Ardy Dunn from Cherokee who had been a Petal Pusher for the 2007 Pasadena trip. Soon I saw Veldene Lindell who also was a 2007 Petal Pusher. They along with Joanne Dawson, Velma Lubeck and Bev Galles were making Braille books.

I have always been intrigued by Braille work because when I was growing up in Kansas, my mother faithfully met with her church friends to make Braille books.

I took their photo and asked them about their project. Here is their story shared by Lorraine Cave, who became the assistant leader in 1998 and continues as the leader since 2004.



“Braille Work Center #96 located at Peace Lutheran Church in Marcus, IA was organized in October 1976. It was the first Braille center in Iowa and was started by Albert and Grace Dorr. Ten LWML societies in the Cherokee Zone worked together at the beginning. We began by making books in Spanish Braille with 73 pages in each book. We have also printed Cantonese, 100 Bible Stories in English, 2nd Kings and ‘Give God Glory’ which we are printing at the present time.”



Pastor James Gruber shared that Peace Lutheran Church is a buzz of activity as each month ten different LWML societies from Cherokee Zone, including Peace LYF youth and a men’s group, faithfully work printing Christian material for the blind and visually impaired. That’s basically three different groups each week who volunteer their time to share God’s Word with people around the world!

The second Braille Work Center in Iowa is located at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Council Bluffs. For the past ten years, St. Paul has had 10-12 faithful workers who weekly print and assemble Braille materials.

How many Braille books were printed in the past 33 years of faithful service at Marcus, 10 years at Council Bluffs, and other District settings? How many people learned about Jesus through those books? Only God knows the answer.

How can you and your church get involved in this outreach? Contact Lutheran Braille Workers to set up a Braille Work Center in your church and/or to receive free materials. There is no cost to setting up a work center, no postage cost to send the materials and no cost to receive the printed materials for a friend or family member who would benefit from Braille.

Lutheran Braille Workers
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Yucaipa, CA 92399
Email: lbw@lbwinc.org
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For additional information on either the Cedar Rapids or the Braille outreach, contact Ellie Menz (ellie.menz@idwlcms.org - 515-386-8420).